**CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT**

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UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Letter dated 6 April 1972 from the Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic has transmitted to the delegation of the USSR to the Committee on Disarmament a Statement by the Government of the German Democratic Republic with the request that this Statement be brought to the attention of all States members of the Committee. The Statement outlines the position of the German Democratic Republic on problems of disarmament which are being discussed by the Committee.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the Secretariat of the Committee to circulate my letter, with the attached Statement by the Government of the German Democratic Republic, as an official document of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

(signed) A. ROSHCHIN
Representative of the USSR in the Committee on Disarmament

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STATEMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
TO THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

I.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic highly appreciates the efforts of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to reach agreement on practical and effective measures of arms limitation and disarmament. The Government of the German Democratic Republic proceeds from the standpoint that the arms race is increasing the danger of armed conflicts and is devouring more and more resources which could be better used for improving the well-being of the peoples. The most important problems which must be solved in the interestes of peace and security are the ending of the arms race -- particularly in the field of weapons of mass destruction -- and also the elimination of these weapons. As a result of initiatives taken mainly by the Soviet Union and the States allied to it, the Committee on Disarmament has been able to draft a number of agreements on arms limitation and disarmament, to which many States have subsequently acceded. The German Democratic Republic has signed and ratified all these agreements without delay.

The treaties submitted by the Committee on Disarmament are proof that this Committee is doing valuable and useful work. This body has acquired significant experience in considering and solving complex problems of disarmament, and this experience will be of advantage in the elaboration of further measures in this field.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic considers that, in addition to the well-tried forms of considering disarmament problems, new ways and means should be found in order to bring mankind closer to the objective of general and complete disarmament. For this reason the Government of the German Democratic Republic welcomes the fact that, at the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, resolution 2833 (XXVI) on the convening of a world disarmament conference received general support. Such a conference could serve to unite the efforts of States aimed at arms limitation and disarmament. It could also give new impetus to the work of the Committee on Disarmament. The German Democratic Republic has from the very outset supported the initiative of the USSR for convening a world disarmament conference. It will work actively for the convening of this conference as soon as possible, and will help to ensure its success.

II.

The Goverment of the German Democratic Republic has noted with satisfaction that the draft convention on prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons and on their destruction, elaborated by the Committee on Disarmament in 1971, met with approval at the twenty-sixth session of

the General Assembly of the United Nations. This Convention creates the prerequisites for eliminating bacteriological and toxin weapons from the arsenals of States once and for all. In addition, it emphasizes the significance of the prohibition of the use of bacteriological and chemical weapons laid down in the Geneva Protocol of 1925.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic considers that the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction is also a first step on the way to the prohibition of chemical weapons. It welcomes the undertaking, contained in this Convention, to continue negotiations with a view to effective prohibition of chemical weapons. The Government of the German Democratic Republic therefore supports the draft convention submitted by the USSR and other States members of the Warsaw Treaty, and also by the Mongolian People's Republic, on prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction. The prohibition of chemical weapons, as provided for in this draft convention, is fully in keeping with the interests of the peoples and the appeals of the United Nations.

III.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic advocates the prohibition of all nuclear weapon tests, and the participation of all nuclear weapon States in such a prohibition. It is prepared to accede to a treaty on the prohibition of underground nuclear weapon tests and, within the scope of such a treaty, to participate on a voluntary basis in the exchange of seismic data. It believes that compliance with the relevant treaty obligations can be guaranteed by national means of detection.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic also shares the opinion expressed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr. Kurt Waldheim, that all the technical and scientific aspects of the prohibition of underground nuclear weapon tests have been so fully explored that only a political decision is now necessary to achieve final agreement on a treaty to this effect. The Government of the German Democratic Republic opposes the attempts by certain States to avoid this political decision.

The efforts of States should be directed towards the elaboration of new agreements on arms limitation and disarmament, and also towards achieving universal effectiveness for the treaties already existing in this field. It is of special importance that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should be universally implemented -- also by such States as the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Israel and the Republic of South Africa, which possess the material, scientific and technological potential to produce nuclear weapons.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic, for its part, has done everything to comply with its obligations under this Treaty. For the German Democratic Republic, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has been in force since 5 March 1970. The safeguards agreement between the German Democratic Republic and the International Atomic Energy Agency, as provided for in article III of this Treaty, was signed on 7 March 1972.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic pledges that it will continue in future to follow with due attention the activities of the Committee on Disarmament, and will actively work for the achievement of practical measures of arms limitation and disarmament. It hopes that the Committee on Disarmament will make progress on the road towards general and complete disarmament in the interests of peace and the security of peoples.